

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A wound dressing comprising a therapeutic agent and a matrix comprising polymers joined by cross-linkages which cross-linkages comprise, ~~or consist of~~, oligopeptidic sequences which are cleavable by a protease associated with wound fluid such that the rate of release of the therapeutic agent increases in the presence of the protease.

Claim 2 (original) A wound dressing according to claim 1 wherein the protease is associated with wound infection or ulcer formation.

Claim 3 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~ wherein the polymers themselves are not degraded by the protease or other factors that may be present in the wound environment.

Claim 4 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to claim 1, ~~2 or 3~~ wherein the polymer is a synthetic polymer.

Claim 5 (original) A wound dressing according to claim 4 wherein the polymer is a polymer of N-2-hydroxypropyl) methacrylamide (HPMA).

Claim 6 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the oligopeptidic sequences consist of 3 to 15 amino acids.

Claim 7 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the protease is elastase and wherein the oligopeptidic sequence comprises ~~or consists of~~ lys-gly-ala-ala-ala-lys – Ala-Ala-Ala, Ala-Ala-Pro-Val, Ala-Ala-Pro-Leu, Ala-Ala-Pro-Phe, Ala-Ala-Pro-Ala or Ala-Tyr-Leu-Val.

Claim 8 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the protease is a matrix metalloproteinase and wherein the oligopeptidic sequence comprises ~~or consists of~~ –Gly-Pro-Y-Gly-Pro-Z-, –Gly-Pro-Leu-Gly-Pro-Z-, –Gly-Pro-Ile-Gly-Pro-Z-, or –Ala-Pro-Gly-Leu-Z-, where Y and Z are amino acids.

Claim 9 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the protease is a collagenase and wherein the oligopeptidic sequence comprises ~~or consists of~~ –Pro-Leu-Gly-Pro-D-Arg-Z-, –ProLeu-Gly-Ley-Leu-Gly-Z-, –Pro-Gln-Gly-Ile-Ala-Gly-Trp-, –Pro-Leu-Gly-Cys (Me)-His-, –Pro- Leu-Gly-Leu-Trp-Ala-, –Pro-Leu-Ala-Leu-Trp-Ala-Arg-, or –Pro-Leu-Ala-Tyr-Trp-Ala-Arg-, where Z is an amino acid.

Claim 10 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the protease is a gelatinase and wherein the oligopeptidic sequence comprises ~~or consists of~~ –Pro-LeuGly-Met-Trp-Ser-Arg-.

Claim 11 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the protease is thrombin and wherein the oligopeptidic sequence comprises ~~or consists of~~ Gly-Arg-Gly-As[-,-Gly-Gly-Arg-, -Gly-Arg-Gly-Asp-Asn-Pro-, -Gly-Arg-Gly-Asp-Ser-, -Gly-Arg-Gly-Asp-Ser-Pro-Lys-, -Gly-Pro-Arg-, -Val-Pro-Arg-, or -Phe-Val-Arg-.

Claim 12 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the protease is stromelysin and wherein the oligopeptidic sequence comprises ~~or consists of~~ -Pro-TyrAla-Tyr-Trp-Met-Arg-.

Claim 13 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the therapeutic agent is an antimicrobial agent, a pain relieving agent, an antiseptic, an analgesic, a local anesthetic, or a protease inhibitor.

Claim 14 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein the therapeutic agent is incorporated within the matrix.

Claim 15 (original) A wound dressing according to claim 14 wherein the wound contacting layer of the dressing may comprise or consist of the matrix within which the therapeutic agent is incorporated.

Claim 16 (original) A wound dressing according to claim 15 wherein the dressing comprises a liquid permeable wound contacting layer, an intermediate layer comprising or consisting of the matrix within which the therapeutic agent is incorporated and an outer, liquid-impervious backing layer.

Claim 17 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 13~~ claim 1, wherein the dressing comprises a barrier layer which comprises the matrix, the barrier layer being for initially separating the therapeutic agent in the wound dressing from wound fluid when in use.

Claim 18 (original) A wound dressing according to claim 17 wherein the barrier layer comprises an apertured sheet having a composition comprising the cross-linked polymers applied thereto in occlusive fashion.

Claim 19 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to claim 17 ~~or 18~~, wherein a layer of the therapeutic substance is provided behind the barrier layer.

Claim 20 (original) A wound dressing according to claim 19, wherein an absorbent layer is provided behind the barrier layer and the therapeutic substance is dispersed in the absorbent layer.

Claim 21 (original) A wound dressing according to claim 17, wherein the barrier layer substantially encapsulates the therapeutic substance.

Claim 22 (currently amended) A wound dressing according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the wound dressing comprises an absorbent layer and/or a backing layer.